

Sit back, relax and enjoy a cup of soothing brewed tea!

Tea

Tea is the most popular beverage in the world, second only to water. There are 3 main types of tea – black (78% of the tea produced and consumed in the world), green (20%) and oolong (<2%) and they are all derived from the same plant, *Camellia sinensis*. Although tea has been consumed for centuries, it has only recently been studied as a health-promoting beverage that may prevent a number of chronic diseases and cancers.

The composition of tea leaves depends on a variety of factors, including climate, season, horticultural practices, and the age of the plant. Teas are a source of caffeine which stimulates the central nervous system, relaxes smooth muscle in the airways to the lungs, stimulates the heart, and acts on the kidneys as a diuretic (increases urine). One cup of tea (8 fluid ounces) contains about 50mg of caffeine, depending on the strength, compared to 65-175mg of caffeine in a cup of coffee.

Teas also contain tannin, trace vitamins & minerals, and polyphenols. It is commonly believed that it is the polyphenols found in tea that have a variety of health benefits. Most of the polyphenols in green tea are flavanols, commonly known as catechins. In black teas, the major polyphenols are theaflavin and thearubigin. Polyphenols have been studied extensively in the laboratory and have shown promise in the prevention of cancer but the relevance to humans has yet to be well established. There is also conflicting evidence from studies examining tea and heart disease. Further studies are required before a recommendation can be made.

Processing reduces polyphenols so it is best to enjoy freshly brewed tea; decaffeinated teas may contain lower levels of beneficial flavanols. Be careful how much bottled tea you drink as it is often loaded with sugar or other sweeteners and calories. Tea also contains theanine, which affects certain neurotransmitters in the brain to produce a calm state of mind. So sit back, relax and enjoy a cup of soothing brewed tea!



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Contains Polyphenols

